

September 2009

Time for Action

Update Report



MAYOR OF LONDON

Greater London Authority September 2009

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- London Serious Youth Violence Board (LSYVB)
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- 11 Million
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Mayor's foreword



Last November, I launched 'Time for Action' – my plan to show our young people that there are alternatives to the dead-end choices of crime and violence.

Tough enforcement is only part of the solution to the crime that troubles our city. We must also make the most of opportunities to intervene before young lives go wrong, all too often irretrievably.

That is why it is so important that we focus on the critical moments when we know our young people are most vulnerable to the myriad of factors that can derail them from the right track – early years, the transition from school to the job market and, sadly for too many, the disastrous consequences of incarceration.

Making the most of education is critical, and I am absolutely clear in that there is no substitute for understanding the basics. There is nothing old-fashioned in making sure our children can read, write and do well in maths. Nor is there any nostalgia in looking at how we can help our young people to build character, to give them the fortitude to deal with the challenges in life and not to take the easy road. Too often the easy road turns into the longest, hardest journey.

I have met hundreds of people from different organisations dedicated to changing the lives of young people. In doing so I have found there has never been a systematic London-wide approach to giving our young people the support and encouragement they deserve. In launching 'Time for Action', I decided to begin this work.

I said last November that no one should underestimate our determination to make a difference and to make a start. Over the past ten months, we have been busy absorbing the lessons of what many of you have told us throughout this consultation process and we are grateful to all of you who have sought to help us in this endeavour.

The whole-hearted goodwill that people expressed for our strategy encouraged us. I want to continue to work together with many of you to unleash the hopes and talents of young people across London.

My strategy is called 'Time for Action' for a very clear reason. You will see in this report that the action has started. We have put our shoulders to the wheel. But your help will continue to be essential in achieving the success and making greatest investment we can make – investment in our future through our young people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Boris Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

Background

The Mayor released his call to partners, *Time for Action*, amidst escalating concerns about youth violence in London.

Current work to tackle youth violence in London is dispersed over a complex array of national, regional and local statutory agencies, voluntary groups, service providers and practitioners, each with their own jurisdictions, targets, funding streams, incentives, and lines of reporting.

Though existing structures in London have achieved some notable successes, the Mayor's formative consultation indicated that, as yet, efforts are insufficiently focussed and coordinated. The *Time for Action* consultation suggested that, in line with public sentiment, there is a real desire on the part of partners and practitioners for Mayoral leadership on the issue.

As London's principal politician elected by popular vote, it is appropriate that the Mayor provides leadership on crime and youth



violence. And it is fundamental that he is accountable to Londoners on one of the key issues affecting their quality of life.

The Mayor acknowledges that it is, properly, the boroughs where the vast majority of local activity is coordinated, funded and delivered. Borough councils must be at the heart of the action to address youth violence where it exists.

It is also right that Government influences how national agencies such as the Home Office, and the Department of Children, Schools & Families operate at a regional and local level.

But one thing should not be forgotten: London is unique. Not all national strategies work as well in the capital as in other parts of the country; similarly, youth violence poses a different challenge in London and requires a different response. Though London is home to only 12 per cent of teenagers in England and Wales, 42 per cent of all teenage murder victims last year were Londoners.

The Mayor's role is in regional leadership: setting the strategic direction of travel in London, leading an effective coalition of agencies

around youth violence and youth crime, promoting efficiency of effort, and addressing gaps in provision – at the crossovers of jurisdictional boundaries and age groups, and where agency priorities are in conflict or are incongruent.

Time for Action is the Mayor's first step in preventing youth violence over the long term. As a prompt for discussion and a rallying call to partners, it openly seeks the assistance of the agencies and partners who have been working hard in this field. It will require all of their dedication and experience to bring the proposals to life for the benefit of all young people in London.

This a new area of activity for the Mayor of London, and he recognises the challenges posed: in complementing the vast amount of good work already underway, in the need to articulate a coherent pan-London approach, and in the need to avoid creating yet more bureaucracy that might stifle action on the ground.

‘What you’ve told us; what we’ve been doing’

Since his election in May last year, the Mayor and his team have met with bereaved families, community organisations, practitioners, ordinary residents and young people from all walks of life to talk about youth violence.

The Mayor recruited a specialist team in February 2009, following on from his September 2008 seminar on serious youth violence and the November 2008 publication of Time for Action. They have been busy learning from the consultation responses and assembling the coalition of dozens of partners to help the Mayor take his plans forward.

The team came into place just in time to benefit from the Mayor’s London Schools and the Black Child conference, which emphasised the need for approaches tailored to the needs of young black Londoners given their significant over-representation in this area.

We have been greatly encouraged by the goodwill and support for the plans, and we are particularly appreciative of the high-quality feedback on the original proposals. We have listened very closely to your views, and in turn we have made a

number of improvements to each of our proposals.

We have also been continually reminded that many of the problems run deep, and that solutions need to be identified and pursued over the long-term. A community worker (who was a young offender herself in the 1980s) recently remarked at City Hall that young people are still crying out for the right kinds of support – more than a quarter of a century later!

The consultation period has been invaluable, given the sheer number of interested parties and the Mayor’s desire to provide stronger leadership on the issue. However, he has been eager to start work as soon as possible. Encouragingly, thanks to the work of our partners, some of the plans are already well on their way to completion. For instance, a dedicated multi-agency team has been working hard to deliver Project Daedalus, which aims to break the cycle of offending by young people leaving custody. A previously disparate group of agencies is now pooling their resources and expertise to turn around the lives of young offenders, thanks to the Mayor’s leadership and unique position.

And our work on Project Titan to support the rollout of YOU London, the partnership of uniformed and

non-uniformed youth organisations, will kick off this autumn with events planned across the capital that will encourage young people and adults alike to get involved in voluntary activities.

Other plans, such as Project Oracle (understanding and sharing what really works), are more complex. While they may take longer to develop, we are certain that we are on the right track. Just recently, the Children's Commissioner reported on the lack of evidence-based

programmes for youth gun and knife crime: exactly the sort of problem that Project Oracle will address.

Together, these and other emerging projects form the Mayor's Time for Action programme. We are committed to working collaboratively on this small number of practical initiatives and plugging the gaps missed by existing provision, with the expectation that these can be embedded and taken forward by relevant agencies into the future.



The Projects

Project Daedalus

What you told us about Daedalus

First-timers in custody have often already accrued a considerable offending history and may not always be ready to change: the focus should be broadened to include all of those who can demonstrate real desire and motivation to turn their lives around.

Resettlement should be a key element of Project Daedalus, with enhancements to the existing support already provided by local authorities 'at the prison gate and beyond'.

Daedalus: what we are doing

We know that first-timers in custody – alongside those who might be willing to address their behaviour – are often accommodated with more entrenched, hard-core, repeat offenders, in turn compromising their prospects for successful rehabilitation.

Through Project Daedalus, the Mayor called for additional efforts at key points of the justice system in order to achieve significant savings further down the line: reduced re-offending, reduced spend on subsequent stretches in custody, and reduced costs to the lives of Londoners.

In line with your feedback, we have expanded the focus of Project Daedalus to include not only first timers in custody, but also those who have been in custody before who show a willingness and strong motivation to change.

We want to see real progress while young offenders are in prison: developing basic skills, increasing their employability, and addressing their offending behaviour. We also want to make sure that their resettlement into the community is a success, an area of work you highlighted as equally important. So, we will provide seamless support on their release to reduce the likelihood of them committing further crimes.

Daedalus: deliverables

- ⇒ A separate wing in Feltham YO1 – the Heron Unit – will become operational in September 2009 to accommodate young people from an initial six London boroughs.
- ⇒ Six additional Feltham staff to be allocated to the Heron Unit: making greater use of time and additional, targeted resources to improve the quality of training for young offenders.
- ⇒ Two non-uniformed staff in the unit, funded by the LDA, to provide intensive support for

young people in preparation of their release.

- ⇒ Creation of the new role of 'resettlement broker', funded by the LDA. Additional staff, dedicated to working with young people and existing agencies to ensure that those leaving custody have jobs, training and homes to go to.
- ⇒ An effective multi-disciplinary triage system: allowing prison staff to identify and assess young people for their suitability for the Heron Unit within the first 24-48 hours in Feltham.



‘We want to see real progress while young offenders are in prison: developing basic skills, increasing their employability, and addressing their offending behaviour.’

Project Brodie

What you told us about Brodie

While enforcement will be part of the story, Project Brodie needs to take a more comprehensive approach to addressing the reasons for truancy, such as bullying and violence, while also taking into account school exclusions.

Project Brodie would benefit from a broader focus on these issues in colleges and pupil referral units, as well as in primary and secondary schools.

Brodie: what we are doing

Failing to attend school has a major impact on young people's education and life chances, making it more likely they will be unemployed after leaving school and increasing the likelihood of being drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour. We know from previous research that those who play truant are also more likely to have offended.

In London there are close to two million days per year lost to unauthorised absences and approximately 18,000 persistent non-attendees (those missing at least 38 days of school per year). Despite recent progress, we should be doing more to ensure school attendance on a day-to-day basis. However, this

cannot be a stand-alone measure: we need to address the causes of non-attendance.

Through Project Brodie, we want to increase attendance in schools by focusing on three interlinked themes. Firstly, reducing bullying and the violent behaviour of some pupils who make others feel unsafe to go to school. Secondly, reducing absences through early intervention, promoting relevant curricula, and building resilience. Thirdly, enforcing attendance where preventative measures fail: a joint role for local authorities and the Metropolitan Police Service.

Through the consultation, our partners highlighted the amount of work already underway across London to reduce exclusions, improve alternative provision, and roll out cross-border protocols on attendance. So far, we have secured the London Children & Young People Partnership's agreement to lead on the project as a priority for joint working across their membership. We have also established a delivery group, with the Metropolitan Police and London Councils, to ensure that Brodie complements these existing efforts.

Brodie: deliverables

- ⇒ Reducing bullying and any risk of violence in and around schools: extending Safer Schools Partnerships across London; expanding community-based anti-bullying initiatives in primary and secondary schools; extending anti-violence programmes within schools and further education colleges.
- ⇒ Preventing absence: providing intensive support for vulnerable pre-teens; promoting a more relevant curriculum to targeted 14-19 year olds in London.
- ⇒ Enforcing attendance: bringing anti-truancy enforcement measures into Pupil Referral Units; increasing the use of technology (SMS/texting) to alert parents/carers of non-attendance; promoting new technology to help services identify and refer those in need of additional support; increasing awareness and use of enforcement (truancy patrols, fixed penalty notices and prosecution arrangements).

'...we should be doing more to ensure school attendance on a day-to-day basis. However, this cannot be a stand-alone measure: we need to address the causes of non-attendance.'

Project Titan

What you told us about Titan

Voluntary and community groups stressed the importance of retaining a voluntary ethos, and highlighted the need for more adult volunteers to expand their work.

Others argued for support of a wider range of non-uniformed groups, in order to ensure relevance to the widest possible range of young people.

Titan: what we are doing

In our original document we made a clear call for providing young people with more opportunities to build confidence, self-respect and what used to be called 'character'. We also expressed support for mentoring, pre-school and parenting programmes.

While we recognise the huge number of organisations doing great work with young people, we do not apologise for our focus on supporting the work of uniformed groups. Those represented under the umbrella of YOU London (such as the Scouts and the Prince's Trust) all have proud histories and long track records of providing young people with the skills and drive to make a good start in life.

We know from listening to you that the principal barrier to expanding

these opportunities is a shortage of adult volunteers, so the Mayor will launch a campaign this autumn to promote the benefits of voluntary work with young people. And though we spoke of compulsion in our original call to partners, we accept that a voluntary ethos is fundamental to the excellent work these organisations do with young people.

Launched at Buckingham Palace in July 2009, the YOU London partnership aims to recruit more young people and, vitally, adult volunteers into its member organisations. Over 2009-10 we will back YOU London's rollout across every borough in London, promoting voluntary opportunities and strengthening their links with boroughs, schools, and extended schools.

Groups such as the Volunteer Police Cadets have proved they can make a real difference in the lives of young people. Its Westminster group started accepting referrals from the local Youth Offending Team several years ago, and has since seen a zero re-offending rate amongst their serving members. So we also want to back the MPS Volunteer Police Cadets in their push to increase membership from 1,300 to 4,000 across London by 2012, and support the joint police-army cadets London Outreach programme.

We are also working with the LDA and Metropolitan Police on targeted mentoring to get at-risk young people into positive activities.

Titan: deliverables

- ⇒ Backing the rollout of YOU London in order to expand the opportunities available to young people in London to get involved with scouting, girl guiding, the cadets, and the Prince's Trust, amongst others through publicity, funding and in-kind support.
- ⇒ Supporting the Volunteer Police Cadets, in line with the MPS's aspiration of 4,000 members by 2012, and the expansion of the MPS/Army Cadets Pan-London Outreach Project across London's boroughs.

'...the Mayor will launch a campaign this autumn to promote the benefits of voluntary work with young people.'



Project Oracle

What you told us about Oracle

Practitioners and statutory partners agreed with Project Oracle and the need to understand and share what really works with those commissioning projects, as well as those involved in delivering work.

You asked us to consider a range of issues related to serious youth violence, including best practice on parenting, engaging young people, and deterring young people from joining gangs.

You asked us to design Oracle in such a way that over time it could become the repository of London's most effective practice and information across a wide range of issues, beyond youth justice, which would support the improvement in the life chances and wellbeing for all young people across the capital.

Oracle: what we are doing

Project Oracle responds to widespread agreement on the need to address causes, rather than just symptoms: a stronger focus on quality early intervention and preventative work to balance current enforcement efforts.

Commissioners and service providers have called for easily accessible information on what really works. Project Oracle will help improve our

collective understanding of the key drivers of serious youth violence, bridging the gap between research, evaluation, and policy to improve front-line service delivery.

We will work with key partners to establish a credible repository that will inform and improve service delivery across London. Its key feature will be an online, 'refereed' clearinghouse to share examples of best practice on successful projects across the capital, including resources to support commissioners and front-line practitioners.

Project Oracle will initially focus on sustained, long-term responses to serious youth violence. Once established, we will broaden this initial scope to include a wider range of issues to improve the life chances and wellbeing of children and young people.

Oracle: deliverables

- ⇒ Repository of 'what really works': online, 'refereed' resource to share examples of best practice on successful projects and proven approaches across the capital, including resources for both commissioners and deliverers of projects.
- ⇒ London evaluation standard: including frameworks, toolkits and

cost/benefit guidelines endorsed by key agencies and partners to help improve consistency of practice across the capital.

- ⇒ Research programme: to fill key gaps in our understanding of serious youth violence. An initial research programme, supported by an expert panel, will undertake or commission work on critical issues.
- ⇒ Annual programme of events: featuring regular academic seminars and workshops for practitioners to embed examples of outstanding practice and feed new intelligence back into Oracle.

‘Project Oracle will initially focus on sustained, long-term responses to serious youth violence.’



Other updates

The Mayor is eager that the opportunities called for under Time for Action are not just seen through the prism of youth justice and crime: he wants all young Londoners to have access to exciting opportunities for developing new interests, following new passions, and achieving new goals.

Sport and Music

The Mayor's sports legacy plan, 'A Sporting future for London' commits to providing over £30 million for grass roots sport and activity across London. Chaired by Commissioner for Sport Kate Hoey, a new forum has been set up to support the plan, in line with Time for Action's call for more sporting opportunities for young people.

'Cultural Metropolis', the Mayor's direction of travel statement for the capital, sets out his ambitions for the visual and performing arts, music, galleries, museums, and the creative industries.

As the precursor to the Mayor's forthcoming cultural strategy, it has a focus on strengthening arts and music education for young people, increasing participation, and building

pathways for new talent. This will be complemented by the Mayor's schedule of musical events and programmes, including the Rhythm of London.

Academies

In Autumn 2008 the Mayor announced his intention to see up to 10 new Academies to promote high quality vocational education in London – particularly important in the current economic environment.

The Academies will focus on improved outcomes in education, cutting the number of young people not in education, employment or training and promoting active citizenship. Each will provide programmes for young people at risk, and will have a clear focus on supporting those who experience multiple disadvantages.

Work is underway between the GLA and the LDA to set up a Mayor's Academy Trust, which will co-sponsor each of the Academies. We are seeking partnerships with businesses, colleges, universities, successful schools and other groups to support the distinctive specialisms of the Academy. Our aspiration is that each student will have guaranteed access to training or a job upon graduating.

Apprentices

We want to expand the number of apprenticeships in London to provide young people with the right skills to open up jobs for them. The Mayor is leading by example: over the next three years, the agencies under the Mayor's control will take on 3,000 apprentices, with places specifically for young people.

This commitment will make a significant contribution to 'London's Future', the London Skills and Employment Board's strategy to increase the number of apprenticeships in the capital by 20 per cent over the next 3 years.

We also recognise the importance of helping more young people develop the skills they need to become apprentices. This is why the LDA is commissioning a £4.6m pre-apprenticeship scheme with the European Union to support young Londoners not in education, employment or training to gain the skills to become apprentices.

Mayor's Scholars

Along with other important outcomes, we know that educational results for young people in care can fluctuate considerably across London. In March this year the Mayor signed the London Pledge for children and young people in care and, through the City Charter, we are now working to raise the levels of all boroughs.

We are working with partners to provide additional educational support to looked after children, initially in Shoreditch, and we will enlist the help of partners from the higher education and voluntary sectors to help children in care make decisions about educational and career pathways.

We will also hold multi-agency seminars for practitioners to build understanding between education providers and social workers. These will be designed to complement the conferences being held by the Government Office for London.

Other formats and languages

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Chinese

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Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी
भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित
नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये
पते पर संपर्क करें

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn có văn bản tài liệu
này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy
liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa
chỉ dưới đây.

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি
(কপি) চান, তা হলে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে
বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος
εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να
επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυ-
δρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں
چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دیئے گئے نمبر
پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde
hazırlanmış bir nüshasını
edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki
telefon numarasını arayınız
veya adrese başvurunuz.

Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى
الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان
أدناه

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ
ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ
ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੋ:

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં
જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર
ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.

